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THE CHARACTER, AND Neceſſary Qualifications, OF A BRITISH Miniſter of State.

Price One Shilling.

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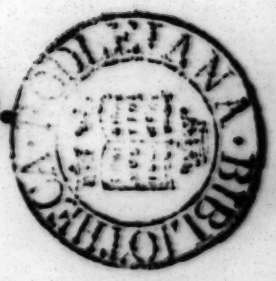
In a LETTER to a Member of Parliament, 1759.



By a LADY.

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MDCCLIX.

THE CHARACTER, AND Neceſſary Qualifications, OF A BRITISH Miniſter of State.

BEFORE we enter into the neceſſary qualifications requiſite to conſtitute a miniſter of ſtate, proper to ſuperintend the affairs relative to government in a commercial nation, it is neceſſary to aſcertain the point we have in view from government, and his adminiſtration. Our purſuits will otherwiſe anſwer the humo-

rous deſcription given by an Engliſh ſovereign of a fox chace "riding poſt out of the "road" to argue in conſequence of this poſition, that England is undoubtedly a commercial nation, it is as undoubtedly morally certain, that it is highly requiſite, the man who from his office has it ſo eſſentially in his power to be aſſiſtant, or prejudicial in the affairs of government, ſhould himſelf be maſter, and that in a ſuperlative degree, of thoſe particular points and branches of politics, on which the intereſt and welfare of theſe kingdoms, more immediately and particularly depend.

England being allowed to be a commercial nation, it muſt in conſequence alſo be allowed, that commerce is the principal, and eſſential intereſt of this kingdom; and that the ſupport, increaſe, and proſperity of trade in all its branches, is the natural ſource of the riches, and ſtrength of this nation in general, and conſequently the principal point to be attended to in a well directed adminiſtration.

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The next point of importance to national commerce, is the judicious, and proper management of the finances; a work of infinite difficulty, laborious, and requires intence application; and which can alone be rendered effectual, or even practicable to any individual, by an habitual courſe of ſimilar tranſactions, though of inferior extent and importance to the Britiſh exchequer.

An extenſive, and flouriſhing ſtate of commerce will infallibly be the ſource of riches to this nation, more valuable, from the conſideration of its many happy attendant conſequences to ſociety, and civil policy, than the mines of Peru and Mexico, but the neceſſary œconomy, and proper management of wealth is equally as eſſential as obtaining it, it being impoſſible to form an idea of any ſum within the power of figures to expreſs ſo immenſe, that is not liable to deſtruction from want of proper management and œconomy. Commerce, ſingly can enable the ſubject to contribute largely to the expences of government; and affluence in

his own private affairs, can only induce him to do it chearfully. An example of ſuperior wiſdom in the management of the public revenues, will at the ſame time benefit, and teach every individual œconomy; it being certain to demonſtration, that every maxim of wiſdom and prudence, is more ſtrongly impreſſed from their Salutary effects, than by orations, even ſuperior in point of eloquence to Cicero or Demoſthenes.

From theſe conſiderations it appears to me, that the perſon, veſted with ſo eſſential a truſt to the well being of this nation in every point of view, as the management and direction of the revenues, provided this ſo important article is tranſacted with fidelity, œconomy, and equal capacity to the object; whether this man in his private ſtation, lives in a manner to diſperſe or accumulate wealth, is of no manner of importance to the public, or worth a moment's reflexion. Judge of his capacity and integrity in the diſcharge of this high office by the effects. Revenues ill conducted, I mean ſingly from want

want of ſkill, will be continually ſubject to deficiencies, in which caſe, new taxes, and additional impoſitions muſt be laid on trade, in effect, on the people in general from their conſequences. A familiar parallel may in theſe circumſtances be drawn from the common occurrences in life, we frequently ſee thoſe of the ſame profeſſion, and to outward appearance the ſame capacity, and equal advantages, the one from œconomy, proper management, and dexterity in his profeſſion, ſhall accumulate large poſſeſſions, the other, without any viſible cauſe become a bankrupt, and yet a cauſe there muſt be, ſince no event can poſſibly happen without it; though perhaps, not at firſt ſight obvious to the generality of mankind, the moſt part unacquainted with thoſe branches of buſineſs, not immediately relative to themſelves. In the Dutch phraſe a bankrupt is delineated " un homme qu'il n'entend pas a tenir ſes " comptes." The Dutch undoubtedly underſtand the art of commerce; and we may collect from this expreſſion, that he who does not know how to conduct his affairs

affairs in ſuch a channel, that the balance ſhall turn in his favour, n'entend pas a tenir ſes comptes: the ideas drawn from familiar occurrences, by inlarging the ſcale, may generally be adapted, and will be found adequate to objects of the higheſt importance; to evince which we need only reflect, that all the millions poſſible to enumerate by figures, the ſyſtem was at firſt deducted from ſo common, and ſimple a principal as that two and two, are equal to four.

A commercial nation is no other than a collected body of merchants; their intereſt is in fact, the intereſt of the whole; for every ſubſequent conſideration of advantage, is in effect dependant on this primum mobile; without commerce, the lands in England would be of little more value, than thoſe in Tartary; for what makes the difference? We have commerce, which furniſhes opportunities of diſpoſing of the produce of our lands to advantage; in Tartary they have none; this conſtitutes the ſole difference between the value of lands

lands in the one country, or in the other.

In the management of our private finances, we find little myſtery to diſcover, whether our expences exceed our income, or what articles muſt be retrenched, not to out-run the limits of our circulating caſh; let traffic or other kind of money negotiations extend into various channels, it is equally eaſy to know the profit or loſs accruing *laſt capital*, and how ſtock augments or diminiſhes; if the account is rightly kept, there can be no more difficulty to know the ſtate of a trading city, whether it proſpers or declines, and its connexions with other places indicate its riſe or decay: carrying on the like idea to kingdoms, it cannot be incomprehenſible to diſcover, whether public loſs, or ſuperlucration obtains. The multiplicity of commercial connexions, the millions of money in circulation, can to this be no obſtruction; they may no leſs eaſily be computed, than the affairs of a ſingle comptoir provided the national accountant is well founded in his political

political arithmetic, and is undeceived in his poſtulata, the baſis of his reaſoning and calculations.

The mercantile negoce, though ever ſo much extended, never puzzle or confounds the ſkilful trader, who has before him every channel of outgo, and income; it is no more difficult to him to know what he gains by a hundred, than by one ſimple branch of his foreign commerce; let but a nation be as accurate in its accounts as the regular trader in adjuſting his gain and loſs by peculiar branches of traffic; the kingdoms account keeper may as certainly, and readily determine the general balance of the whole, as the particular balance of diſtinct parts, and conſequently as preciſely the total gain, or the total loſs of the whole kingdom; in this there is little myſtery, fix only on the ſource, and it may eaſily be comprehended; the ſeat of cuſtoms will afford every needful light for this purpoſe, if the ſtate of import, and export is preciſely aſcertained, and the prime coſt and charge of *purchaſes* and

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ſales juſtly computed every three or four years, the national accountant cannot miſguide the ſtateſman, nor the ſtateſman himſelf or the kingdom. But how can any man pretend to take the helm of government without theſe requiſite inquiſitions? if the cuſtom accountant is inaccurate, let his ſuperiors in office ſee to the amendment, or the nation's real abilities can never be determined with preciſion, or the actual ſtate of the finances underſtood, without ſuch account to direct the enquiry.

Was Great Britain a free port, and had no revenue of cuſtoms, it would not be leſs requiſite to know the exact ſtate of imports, and exports, and their priſtine value by coſt and charge, or we may trade to the nation's ruin, as private men do to their own; but when ſo material a proportion of the royal revenue ſprings from the cuſtoms, as neceſſarily muſt in a trading nation like England, it is amazing that we hear of no total accounts being laid before the repreſentatives, of every diſtinct branch of foreign trade from year

to year, eſtimates may be called for to little, nay to bad purpoſe, relative to the revenue ariſing from this, or the other peculiar article of imports, modelled to know what the government gains by its revenue, with a view to lay freſh taxes only, and no view to ſcrutinize, whether the whole branch of foreign trade, of which any particular article may participate, is lucrative, or detrimental to the kingdom; if the whole balance of trade turns to our emolument; it will be impolitic to overload a few particular articles, which may poſſibly turn the ſcale in our diſfavour, and if the whole balance turns in our diſfavour, it is ridiculous to think of burthening a trifling, or any particular part; is a branch of trade, or thoſe particular articles appertaining to ſuch branch, to be judged of by what it brings in to the revenue? if ſo, the more foreign luxuries produce to the government, the richer we grow, and the leſs, the poorer, when it is demonſtrable the caſe is diametrically otherwiſe; the leſs the revenue on foreign imports, the leſs of foreign produce we conſume, and yet the

deficiency in this branch of the cuſtoms, at preſent occaſions the lamentations of our great ſtateſmen, and the more they labour to tax them, though in vain, with a view to increaſe the revenue; the more taxes are impoſed, the more will the motives for ſmugling become augmented, wherefore ſhould not rather our *import revenue* be ſo politically deviſed, as to enrich the ſtate, while it increaſes the revenue, than to increaſe the revenue while it impoveriſhes the ſtate?

Before the tariff of 1664 in France, the duties on import and export of merchandiſe, were divided into ſo many branches, paid in ſo difficult a manner, and collected in ſo many places; as laid the merchant under great perplexity; the conſolidating all theſe duties into a general tariff was ſolicited by the merchants of divers parts of that kingdom; and many of the accuſtomed privileges, being at once aboliſhed, in favour of trade, has in its conſequences proved a great encouragement to the merchant, as it eſtabliſhed an equality in

trade, and relieved him from the difficulties attending the entring, paſſing and repaſſing his goods, to different parts, and on different occaſions. The multiplicity of taxes, duties and cuſtoms paid on ſeveral kinds of goods, and in ſeveral places, ports and provinces were formerly ſo great, and the people of that kingdom were ſubject to ſo prodigious a number of duties, gabelles, &c. on every article of merchandiſe tranſported, as well from province to province for home conſumption, as import, and export, that trade was liable to great embarraſment and confuſion in collecting them: but their duties now being reduced to a ſettled form, and general payment, the buſineſs of the merchant in France, is greatly eaſed, and encouraged; which has certainly proved the removal of a great diſadvantage from the commerce of that kingdom; to this wiſe regulation in France, may we not in great meaſure attribute, the great increaſe, and flouriſhing ſtate of their commerce, ſince that period, eſpecially if we add to this conſideration, the calculation of the additional burthens laid on

Britiſh commerce ſince this æra; calculate in what proportion commerce in the one nation has been eaſed, and additionally taxed in the other, and the juſt eſtimate naturally follows.

Some occaſional buſineſs in mercantile import, led me to conſider our cuſtom duties, as being abſolutely neceſſary, that entries might be properly made, duties juſtly paid, and penalties avoided; to my aſtoniſhment, I found it an abſtruſe ſtudy, and almoſt deſpaired my arithmetic would reach it, the Engliſh rate book, is not only more perplexed than the French at preſent, but appears to me to be infinitely more ſo, than the French rate book muſt have been, before the tariff 1664, the imports, and ſubſidies are ſo numerous, the computations ſo abſtruſe, that with difficulty I waded through this myſtere marcatoire. Were thoſe who have the power of redreſſing our complaints, in their own private fortunes once to experience, the difficulties of the Engliſh merchant in tranſacting the cuſtom duties, independant of the large ſums they

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are daily in advance on that account, a remedy of this real diſtreſs on trade, would at leaſt be attempted: trifling articles of mercantile buſineſs, often excite an accurate obſervation of the national finances, the application, from any motive whatever, to accompts, naturally lead to the ſtudying them in all their branches, as this ſtudy becomes captivating the farther you advance in it from the demonſtrative certainty attending it, an advantage, which in no equal degree can poſſibly be attain'd in any other branch of learning, or ſcience: the everlaſting difficulties, and diſputes among our ſtateſmen on the ſubject of the revenues, and money tranſactions of this kingdom, of courſe creates curioſity, with regard to a topic for ever agitated, never underſtood, and generally repreſented as ſome profound myſtery beyond the reach, and ſuperior to the force of human underſtanding; I hourly expect from the reluctance and dread which ſeems to ſeize every one towards entring on this ſubject, that this ſantom of imagination, will, in the ſtyle of poetical deſcriptions of a heathen-deity, be repreſented with Difficulty,

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and Terror in her train, too formidable for any mortal to encounter; upon such an occasion, I think one should be tempted to innumerate the list of those heroes and statesmen, who for thirty years past, have been baffled in their attempts (for we will suppose they all endeavoured it) of reducing this insurmountable object, within the bounds of reason, and proportion; alleviating the despair of our reader with the hope that the year 1759 and the name of Mr. P— and Mr. L— will conclude the list of men of genius, and superior talents, incapable of carrying their arithmetic beyond the limits of a pound sterling, and that this fantom, like other shadows, vanishes at a nearer approach.

The little knowledge I have acquired in the transactions of customs, point out to me, that after royal prerogative was abridged, a revenue scheme was substituted to supply its place; and that the number of duties, have since been greatly augmented; I cannot from reasoning on the effects of these events determine, whether the power of the crown has

has not by this means been extended beyond the former limits of the prerogative; nor is it of any manner of importance; the proper exertion of power being the ſole object worthy the wiſh, or attention of a reaſonable creature, not the hand it is veſted in.

I hate noiſe and clamour, yet while our cuſtom duties, as at preſent, are twenty, and twenty five per cent on general imports, and that no exceptions are made in ſubſidy revenues, the merchant cannot remain ſatisfied, or ſilent; for a very prevalent reaſon, viz. he cannot afford to live, nor while he remains an honeſt man, can he die, without the aſſiſtance of old age, or diſtempers; what then is to become of him, unacquainted with all other arts, or methods of advantage, but ſingly thoſe of a honeſt induſtry? as a man converſant in the faſhionable world you will aſk me, what I mean by the word *induſtry*, and whether it is poſſible for a gentleman to be induſtrious? I anſwer, that it is not only poſſible, but neceſſary to every rank, and ſtation in life, and becomes more ſo, the higher the ſtation we poſſeſs, and

that

that the greateſt ridicule ever thrown on a certain nation in Europe is, that in that country you will be told, by a wretch loſt in ignorance, and indigence, that he is a *gentleman* and as a proof of it, that neither himſelf nor his anceſtor for many generations ever did any thing but eat, and ſleep.

Our whole commerce in imports is taxed in general, without diſtinction in particular branches, whether the nation gains or loſes by ſuch branches. Our treaties of commerce claſh with our general Tariff, and our cuſtom duties with common ſenſe; if this ſcene inſtead of being changed, is enlarged, what muſt be the unavoidable conſequence? as a repreſentative of the people, give yourſelf the trouble to conſider, and as far as lays in your power, exert the offices of the truſt repoſed in you by your fellow ſubjects, and a trading city; aſſured that the grievances complained of are not irremediable, but ſingly proceed from the leading men in the direction of public affairs, being unacquainted with the principals, and intereſts of commerce, and money tranſactions; ow-

ing poſſibly, that in the beginning of life, a very ſmall ſhare fell under their management and direction, and that they never had opportunities of being inſtructed, or employed, by thoſe converſant, and engaged in extenſive money negotiations; and I believe it is a general obſervation, that riches accidentally, and profuſely ſhowered down on any individual, or acquired by degrees in a regular courſe of buſineſs, has a very different effect on the mind, and abilities of the poſſeſſor.

At preſent I ſee but little other advantage to be obtained by commerce, but that the trader cannot fail of being thoroughly inſtructed in the real ſtate of the nation, a moſt unhappy exchange for the profits he might reaſonably expect from his profeſſion, at the expence of that fortune, acquired by his former pains and labours.

The augmentation of duties upon foreign merchandize, muſt neceſſarily create the ſame upon Britiſh commodities, in other countries; and though we do not ſcruple

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purchaſing foreign imports under our unconſcionable load of incumbrances, experience ſhews us no nation in the world will follow our example, and the Engliſh merchant is obliged to make large abatements of his own profits upon his ſales, or never unlock his warehouſes: this, as a fine gentleman you will tell me, is only the private loſs of the merchant, but give me leave to obſerve to you, that the Engliſh merchant trading to a leſs proportion of profit, than the merchants of other nations, his capital is not increaſed in proportion to theirs, the conſequence, that their traffic daily becomes more extenſive, his leſs, this conſidered in the whole body of merchants, muſt infallibly affect, and that in a ſenſible manner, the revenue ariſing from cuſtoms, public credit, ſingly ſupported by our merchants, and the nation in general; in argument of this poſition I need only remind you, that we once had a merchant in the city of London, * who prevented the ſailing of the Spaniſh armado againſt England a twelvemonth, by preventing their bills being negotiated at

* Tho. Sutton, Eſq;

Genoa. And are theſe the ſet of men you can ſilently, and with ſupineneſs ſee cruſhed, and oppreſſed, being denied the advantages, and encouragement granted to their profeſſion in neighbouring nations, and neceſſary to traffic? The French merchant can at this hour afford to ſell from fifteen, to twenty per cent cheaper, at an average, than England; yet under theſe circumſtances, additional duties have been impoſed even on exports; ſuch maſterly policy is not only diſcernable, but unhappily felt by every trader.

That the Dutch can ſupply themſelves with all kinds of merchandiſe, ſo much cheaper in France than in England, is a prevalent reaſon for the connection between thoſe two nations, ſince from this circumſtance, the Dutch are enabled to furniſh foreign markets, with certain advantage; from experience it is become an eſtabliſhed maxim, that thoſe merchants, who can afford to ſell cheapeſt, will have the preference throughout the world, in all commercial dealings; in order to ſell cheap the merchant

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muſt live, and carry on his buſineſs at ſmall expence, muſt be able to purchaſe manufactures proportionably, and accompliſh his exports, paying ſmall duties: whether at this juncture, this is in the Engliſh merchants power, I refer to your own judgment.

That we multiply our taxes on our domeſtic, no leſs than on foreign commodities, appears aſtoniſhing; but it is ſtill more amazing we ſhould mortgage thoſe taxes without limitation of retracting them; the intereſted lender might be glad a man mortgaged his eſtate on ſuch terms, thereby becoming a ſlaviſh annuitant, or obliged to convert intereſt into principal: notwithſtanding our idle boaſts of millions yet in petto, it is far from impoſſible this may become our ſituation as a nation, and when once we are unable to pay the intereſt, the principal will be eagerly caught at, yet by what means it will be poſſible, to raiſe a few millions only in *hard caſh*, while we are daily exporting our ſpecie out of the kingdom, is the peculiar conſideration of our ſtate adepts; ſince thoſe who are fruitful to create expence, ſhould

furniſh

furniſh means of acquiring much to ſupport it, without burthening commerce beyond the juſt balance.

Our exciſes are no leſs numerous than our cuſtom duties, and theſe are entailed as an eternal benediction on poſterity, and we are ſtill farther threatned in addition with a general exciſe, qualified with the epithet of a conſtitutional exciſe, an expreſſion which ſeems dictated in the ſtyle of an anti-continental war, and it is highly probable, may be attended with effects, full as detrimental to commerce; as in Italy you know the ſchool of each different maſter, by the ſtyle of the pictures; ſo in England we eaſily diſtinguiſh the members of each different faction, by the peculiar quaintneſs of phraſe, and language, by each party adopted: if we are to have a general exciſe without exciſe laws, why is this new ſcheme ſo odiouſly denominated? —— if it is not the poſthumous progeny of a W——e, but that of a * Harrington, let it be explained, and then the people will uphold or decline their

* Vide Harrington's Oceana.

voice

voice of popularity, at preſent the only criterion of a Britiſh miniſter's conduct.

Is it poſſible we can be ſo infatuated to imagine, that advancing in the public debt, and proportionable taxes will prevent our ſpecie going out of the nation? while this deception continues, we can expect to preſerve no other than paper circulation in the kingdom, the increaſe of which ſpecie baniſhes the ſolid caſh of the nation; and if the ſcheme of reducing intereſt farther takes place, to force more into trade, how will the money be employed, ſince our taxes, in effect, lay an embargo on exports? and if we draw millions from the ſtocks to throw into commerce, by what means will ſuch deficiency be ſupplied? entring into a Dutch war will never contribute towards it; that will more probably draw millions more of Dutch property out of the public funds, nor will the paying a very conſiderable balance annually to Ruſſia, Sweden and Denmark, which we actually do, allow us to ſupport additional taxes on commerce; ſome ſcheme muſt be attempted to bring in money

money in one channel, while in ſo many others it is expended, or the conſequence muſt in a very ſhort period of time prove fatal to this, once affluent nation. If our financiers are ſo perplexed to raiſe money for taxes this year, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe the difficulty next year will not be leſſened. If our victories are to balance the expences of the war, we are at this hour ſenſible a peace is become neceſſary; and we may flatter ourſelves from our ſucceſſes, we have it in our power to obtain ſuch conditions, as may render a peace both advantagious and laſting: if not, we have to conſole us, a national debt of *one hundred millions*, privation of our ſolid caſh, and the multiplicity of paper credit; the happy effects of our anti-continental war, I had like to have miſtaken and ſaid, our anti-conſtitutional war, but as I give implicit belief to what is affirmed by our ſtateſmen at the helm of government, I will conclude this expreſſion *anti-continental* war, literally, and exactly expreſſive, though it is my unhappineſs not perfectly to comprehend its meaning.

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It is impoſſible increaſing our national debt and taxes, can increaſe either the liberty, or property of the ſubject, it will rather have a contrary effect, and add weight and opulence to the crown; nor will this ſyſtem prove more ſucceſsful to enable the mercantile part of this kingdom to maintain a commercial competition with other ſtates after the war is ended; is it not to be feared, this circumſtance may influence the Engliſh trader in times of peace, to traffic in French, preferably to Engliſh commodities, to all parts of the world? this I imagine can never anſwer our wiſhes to diſincumber trade, and thereby put ourſelves on a level with our neighbours and rivals in point of commerce. If we propoſe drawing away two thirds of the priſtine annuity from the public creditors, in order to pay them a part of their own principal, the natural effect is diminiſhing the funds, whoſe revenue depend on the home expences of the

nation, or more properly depend on the luxuries of thoſe in affluence; if you propoſe to *tontine* it, and ſink twenty or thirty million by life annuities in time of peace, it is poſſible another war may intervene before one quarter of thoſe lives fall off, by which means we run the riſk of being incumbered with an increaſed debt of forty millions, before five million is anihilated by life annuities. Theſe expedients are equally trite, and ineffectual; we have experienced the ſyſtem of irredeemable debts long enough to be convinced of its inſufficiency, by wearing out the nation with the immenſity of a continued annuity, we have had a race of miniſters, nay who became miniſters, from the ſole merit of converting our irredeemable, into redeemable incumbrances; and will our preſent M——r *that ſervant of the people*, now deſtroy all that has been accompliſhed towards attaining this point by his predeceſſors, and render our

ſtate

ſtate burthens again irredeemable! forbid it England's better genius —— the public creditors can never prove ſo infatuated to imagine their property more ſecure, and therefore the more valuable, the more diſtant it is from being paid off, it is inconceivable the ſtock-holder can ever become thus blind to his own intereſt, or perſwade himſelf that an addition to the public debt, can really increaſe the value of the original debt by increaſing the ſecurity of payment only; they have already demonſtration, how difficult it has proved to raiſe an annuity for this year's addition of public debt, and it is improbable to ſuppoſe, that the more the commerce and navigation of this kingdom is incumbered with taxations, the nation will thereby become more affluent and their debts in conſequence more ſecure; no one in their ſenſes can adopt ſuch a ſeries of incredible abſurdities; how all theſe embarraſſments we complain of, might have been prevented,

and may ſtill be remedied, is as eaſy to point out, as to mention. —— Let us beware we do not multiply enemies, inſtead of inlarge our dominions; we are too ſanguine in our hopes if we flatter ourſelves, the potentates of Europe will paſſively behold the all triumphant Engliſh, if they intend to ſet no bounds to their hoſtilities, becauſe they can ſo eaſily mortgage the property of poſterity, to knight-errant it over the globe.

The eſtabliſhed ſyſtem of politics all over Europe of maintaining a juſt equilibrium of power among the different ſovereigns, and ſtates, will ever prevent any one nation acting to the total deſtruction of a neighbouring kingdom; the æra for making vaſt and ſurprizing conqueſts is long paſſed; the political ſyſtem of the world is changed, and the extenſive commerce of later ages, has not only civilized mankind, but has alſo been productive of nearer connections of affinity,

affinity, and mutual intereſt among different nations. When Cæſar, and Alexander ruined half the world by their boundleſs ambition, the greater part of thoſe they ſubdued, were unacquainted with thoſe arts of policy, and military diſcipline by which they conquered; mankind, eſpecially in Europe, are become much nearer on a level, with regard to all theſe conſiderations. The effect to the native countries of theſe two admired, theſe ſhining characters proved, that Macedon was ruined, and Rome enſlaved.

It has been tranſmitted down as good policy to make peace while the ſtate remains in ſuch a ſituation as in ſome meaſure to be able to command it; a nation, like an individual may otherwiſe run the riſk *, like Hogarth's Law Contender, of

* Vide Hogarth's print, the Law Contender emaciated, and in rags, crying out, I have carried the day.

making

making a figure of contempt, rather than glory.

What I have farther to add on the ſubject of the neceſſary qualifications to conſtitute a miniſter of ſtate in Great Britain is ſo merely the effect of imagination, that I am almoſt in diſpute, whether I may venture to communicate my ideas, and draw the picture formed on this ſubject, by the wiſh of proſperity and happineſs to my native country, dreading the fate of Pigmalion for my countrymen, of becoming enamoured with a pleaſing *form*, but alas! inanimate, and void of exiſtence.

We will wiſh the man deſtined for a Britiſh miniſter of ſtate, born with a ſuperiority of reaſon, ſufficient to render him abſolute maſter of his paſſions; by nature of an eaſy chearful diſpoſition, which more than

than all the philoſophy we can acquire by ſtudy and argument, contributes towards preſerving a conſtant ſerenity of mind, on which the operations of reaſons and judgement in great meaſure depend; to become a proficient in any ſtudy, we muſt poſſeſs a natural diſpoſition towards that very ſcience it preſwades and inculcates; and as we ſay, a man muſt be born a painter to become an artiſt in his profeſſion, ſo a man muſt be born with a certain equality, and benevolence of temper, to become a philoſopher, for nature generally forms the firſt rudiments of every ſcience, in which we ever attain any degree of proficiency.

We will wiſh this being of imagination, exempted from the general foibles of mankind, avarice, vanity, and ambition, but beyond all, diveſted of jealouſy and envy, of all paſſions, the moſt fatal in its conſequences

quences to his adminiſtration, ſince this circumſtance, will be the ſure means of depriving both the miniſter, and government of the eminent ſervices, different genius's and talents might render their king and country. —— That he in any degree is acquainted with the ſciences, will be ſufficient to conſtitute him the encourager and protector of learning. A general knowledge of mankind and quick diſcernment, of their different characters, and abilities; together with the perfect poſſeſſion of the whole ſyſtem of figures, is abſolutely neceſſary to his ſituation as miniſter, to enable him to direct the proper management of the finances with judgement, and accuracy, prevent being impoſed on himſelf by falſe repreſentations, and render him capable of underſtanding the true intereſts of commerce in all its various branches, which ſingly depend on juſt and accurate calculations, in conſequence of certain in-

forma-

formation of facts; with relation to trafic as far as is requiſite to form theſe calculations, eaſily obtained: and it occurs to me, that on the ſame baſis is founded the moſt unerring ſyſtem of politics, at leaſt with regard to the operations of my own mind, I am ſenſible I draw the idea of a ſuperiority of ſtrength in one nation to another, from calculation, whether the advantages to be obtained are tantamount to the expence of lives, and treaſure by a war, ſingly from the ſame cauſe, and the number of troops, ſhipping, &c. neceſſary upon ſuch and ſuch an occaſion, the funds requiſite to ſupport theſe undertakings and the proportion to the power, and ability of the kingdom.

I expect you will tell me, I am gone mad on the ſyſtem of figures. —— I own it is my favourite ſtudy and employment, and like a truly enamoured mind, am perſwaded,

every one equally converſant with its advantages, would in the ſame degree become captivated.

The wiſe direction of affairs of government in this nation does not appear to depend on an immenſe fund of ſcholaſtic literature, or the moſt eloquential flights of imagination, nor will the talents of a virtuoſo, antiquarian, and the accompliſhments of the belles lettres, form thoſe of a profound ſtateſman, or in any degree conſtitute the able miniſter in a nation like that of Great Britain; any more than the ordinary knowledge of the hiſtorian, as it reſpects party machinations and intrigues of ſtate, to advance prerogative, extend ariſtocracy, or eſtabliſh oligarchy under the pretence of an Eutopian democracy * theſe accompliſhments however eſtimable in the eyes

* A ſyſtem of government ſo denominated by a certain great miniſter.

of

of our modern politicians, are remote from thoſe requiſite to from a firſt miniſter in this kingdom; for theſe talents however exalted, are only to be ranked in the ſecondary claſs, the Britiſh ſtateſman, ſhould be verſed in talents of a ſuperior and different nature; let him like Themiſtocles, be inſtructed in the arts of making the barbarian the man, and from the ſavage, converting him into the human ſpecies; let him be acquainted with thoſe arts of government that render millions of mankind as happy as their nature will admit; and let him be perſwaded this only can be effected, by exerting and regulating their gifts of honeſt labour, and induſtry; let him ſtudy the ſcience to balance the ingenuity and induſtry of one nation, in oppoſition to others; and let the examples drawn from his maxims, and conduct, animate his fellow ſubjects to emulate the praiſe worthy qualifications of foreigners —— this will prove the

moſt permanent ſervice he can render his country without injuring, or diſtreſſing other ſtates; on the contrary, he will by this means, contribute to the general felicity of the world; and conquer other nations by his wiſdom, rather than his tyranny; it is inhuman to think of extirpating the race of mankind; and little leſs cruel to enſlave them by new ſpecies of dominion, unleſs it tends to increaſe their happineſs; and then the true ſtateſman like the beſt general, will join lenity to his conqueſts.

Policy with reſpect to foreign ſtates, ſhould be judged of by the criterion of the connective, and independent intereſts, and powers of different nations; and is ſingly determinable from the principals, and rule of proportion; let it be weighed *in that* balance of *reaſon*, unknown to moſt, with facility attained by none, yet poſſible to be acquired by all, reſolved not to confine their

their views to the ſmall circle of a city or Saint Stephen's chapel; the diſtance of countries ought by no means to exclude them from the ſtateſman's political obſervation, his proper and peculiar ſtudy is the natural connections, and intereſts of nations; and the more of them he has the ſkill to make ſubſervient to the advantage of his country, the more he diſplays his own ſuperiority of talents, and wiſdom; to do this, I fear, requires ſomething beyond pathetic oratory, it is infinitely more than the college teaches; or the confined intrigues of a court can inform, this is not to be learnt within the circumference of party cabal, or acquired by the arts of a temporary popularity; nor ſhall we find it in the diſputes of a ſenate, where contention reſides, too generally from the motives of avarice and ambition.

If

If the miniſter aims at making the ſtate opulent, and powerful, if he really intends the laſting proſperity of the Britiſh nation, he muſt diveſt himſelf of partialities, and prejudices, though ever ſo habitual, and natural to his temper, and regard the individuals of the nation, at the helm of which he is placed, in a ſphere as extenſive, and impartial as the ſun, and by his influence raiſe the ſeeds of every talent to perfection, unprejudiced to the ſoil, whereever ſown, that being of little importance, to the inlarged idea, provided the fruit is found beneficial, and ſalutary to the general ſyſtem. Let the Britiſh ſtateſman extend his views into the remote traces of the yet ſavage empires of the world, which afford a ſcene of advantages to ourſelves by commerce, yet furniſh ſufficient to content the hopes and neceſſities of other nations: is the ſtateſman to be deterred from this, by the idea of ſavage? or does the colour

of

of a man diveſt him of talents to render himſelf reciprocally uſeful to ſociety? thoſe we eſteem barbarians, moſt certainly do not exiſt excentrically to the univerſal powers of nature; why then, ſhould we not cultivate trafficable connections with all who bear the image, and reſemblance of humanity? thereby we may be inſtructed, as already we have been in different inſtances, of objects of traffic, at preſent, out of the ſphere of our knowledge.

Though conducting the ſword, is undoubtedly an eſſential part of a prime miniſter's department, yet it is infinitely inferior to that of making the beſt uſe of conqueſt: without the neceſſary attention, and requiſite knowledge, to perpetuate, and eſtabliſh commerce, our conqueſts on the American continent, and African coaſt will prove fruitleſs victory; and this the ſtateſman ſhould no leſs ſtudy, than extent of dominion; a circumſtance

ſtance which in many inſtances, has proved fatal to thoſe ſtates, who from a ſenſeleſs ambition, have purſued the ſyſtem of extending their dominions, without reaping any other advantage than ſingly extenſion of dominion; I ſhall trouble you with no other examples at preſent, to ſupport this argument, than Rome, and Carthage, which ſunk under the weight of their own conqueſts, as they became too extenſive in proportion to the natural power, and ſtrength of the ſtate to ſupport.—Thoſe triumphs celebrated by the Romans with extravagant tranſports, were their bane; it was rejoicing over the poiſon, that led faſt to their utter deſtruction.

The extenſion of commerce, not of dominion, ought upon all occaſions to be the fixt point of the Britiſh ſtateſman, and the cementing commercial connections with different nations: this ſyſtem will be found laſtingly

laſtingly beneficial to trade in all its various branches, and to the nation in general, from every diſtinct conſideration, in its conſequences.

War and arms naturally deſtroy the milder arts of peace; and as effectually baniſh the arts of civil policy as "ſciences and learning" the nation in a ſtate of warfare; the horrid ſcenes, and events of war, being little adapted to the human mind, while unactuated, and undeformed by violent paſſions: to contemplate with joy, the deſtruction, and ruin of kingdoms, and the human ſpecies, is rather a delight calculated for an infernal ſpirit, than a reaſonable being: could we command tranquillity, this world, replete with beauty, would become a paradiſe; this ſingle circumſtance, leads the rational and refined mind, to wiſh a tranſition from a ſcene, which would otherwiſe afford perfect happineſs: though we cannot poſitively for-

ſwear the cataſtrophe of a war, we may at leaſt *endeavour* to avoid it; and accelerate the happy exchange of the ſickle, and ploughſhare for the ſword.

If a ſtateſman, conſcious of ſuperior abilities, cenſures the meaſures of his collegues, it is reaſonably to be expected he ſhould rectify thoſe meaſures he condemns: if he is capable of acting alone; is in himſelf all ſufficient; to what purpoſe does he ſhare any department with others? but, if this, from experience is found, as it is conſiſtent with reaſon to imagine it ever will, impoſſible to any degree of human abilities, will a miniſter appear excuſable, that obſtructs the operations of others, who no leſs than himſelf ſtudy, and endeavour the welfare of their country?

That perfection, which never yet centered in any one man, is ſtill exiſting among numbers,

bers, distributed by a wise direction, and parental equality; what with anxiety, and restless pursuit we are continually seeking, every moment surrounds us; inlarge but the circle of your researches, and you are sure to find perfection, though dispersed in different talents to mankind: it is what no prism can collect; yet without being a profound philosopher, I think a magnet might be imagined, under royal authority, to attract all these different endowments, to act exactly centrical to one determined point.—To each particular excellence, wherever distinguished, let a public testimony be afforded; a superior degree of honour will from hence redound to the minister, that of being possessed of the ultimate end of all learning, and human wisdom, *the knowledge of mankind*; judicious in the choice of his associates from wise distinction, incapable of envy, from real superiority of understanding.—These are my ideas of the

necessary

neceſſary qualifications for a Britiſh miniſter of ſtate; and whoever the man is, who poſſeſſes them in the moſt eminent degree, I ſhould wiſh placed by royal favour in that ſtation, where he might moſt exert his talents in the ſervice of his country.

I am,

SIR, &c. &c.

May, 1759.

FINIS.